DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 428 883 PS 027 463

TITLE	Global Perspectives on Early Childhood Education. Proceedings from the Global Perspectives on Early Childhood Education Workshop (Washington, DC, April 6-7, 1999).
INSTITUTION	National Academy of Sciences - National Research Council, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Spencer Foundation, Chicago, IL.; Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.; Foundation for Child Development, New York, NY.
PUB DATE	1999-04-00
NOTE	66p.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Child Development; Conference Papers; *Cultural Influences; Day Care; *Educational Quality; *Foreign Countries; *Global Approach; Individualism; Models; Preschool Curriculum; *Preschool Education; Program Descriptions; Public Policy; Standards; Workshops
IDENTIFIERS	Collectivism; *Day Care Quality; Europe; Italy; Japan; North America; Turkey

ABSTRACT

A workshop on Global Perspectives on Early Childhood Education brought together leading experts on preschool education and early learning in other countries. The workshop was intended to stimulate the exchange of ideas on early childhood education by providing an opportunity for early childhood educators, researchers, and policy experts from around the world to meet and discuss common concerns. This document contains the papers presented at that workshop. The papers and presenters are as follows: (1) "Global Perspectives on Early Childhood Education: Keynote Address" (Jerome Bruner); (2) "Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC): Preschool Policies and Programs in the OECD Countries" (Sheila Kamerman); (3) "Italian Early Childhood Education: Variations on a Cultural Theme" (Rebecca New); (4) "Early Learning and Human Development: The Turkish Early Enrichment Program" (Cigdem Kagitcibasi); (5) "Comments on Early Education" (Robert Myers); and (6) "Beyond the 'Average Native': Cultural Models of Early Childhood Education in Japan" (Susan Holloway). Each chapter contains references. (KB)

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The Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy
National Academy of Sciences
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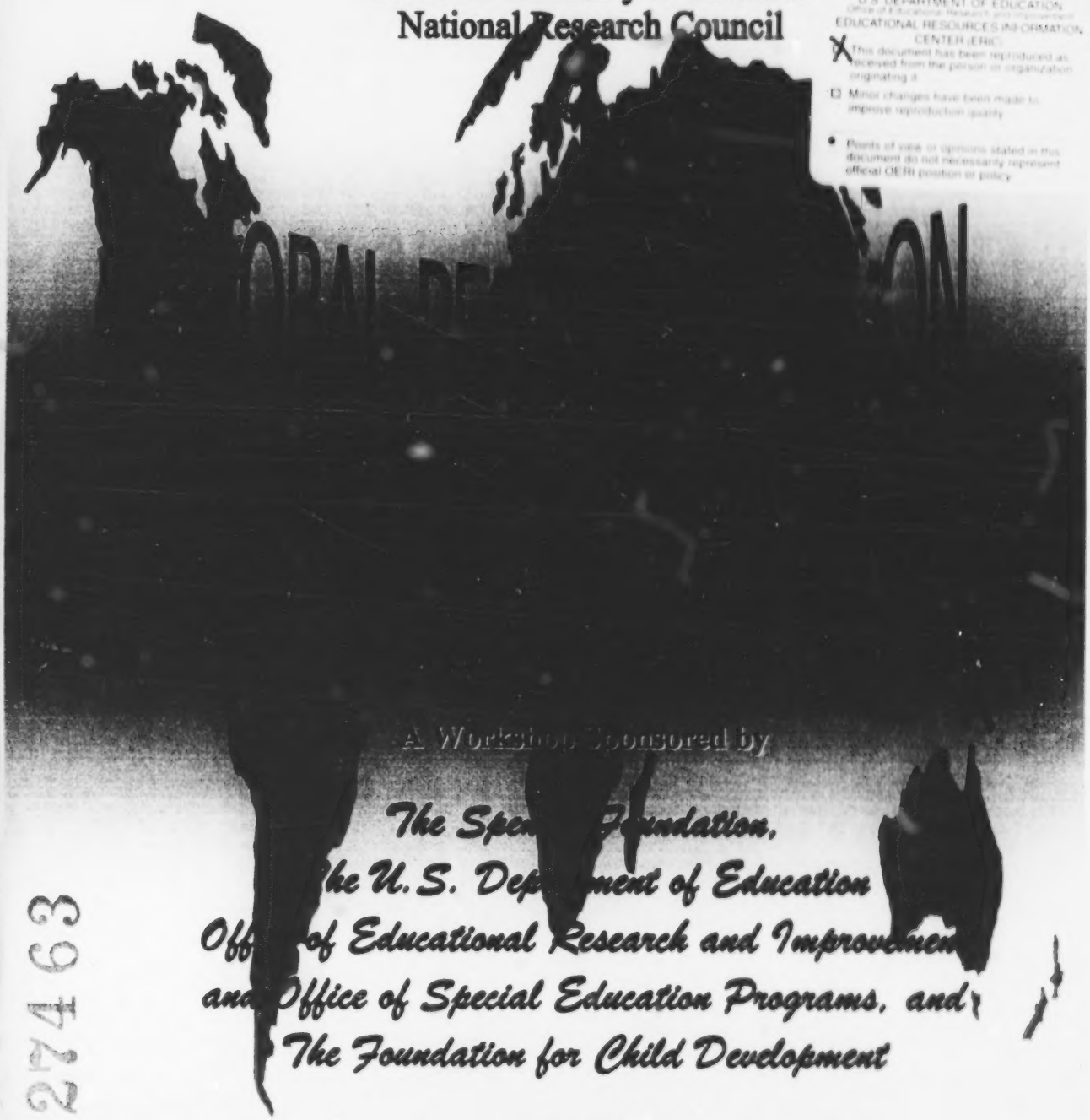

A Workshop Sponsored by

The Spe[illegible] Foundation,
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Offi[illegible] of Educational Research and Improvement
and Office of Special Education Programs, and
The Foundation for Child Development

April 6-7, 1999
Washington, D.C.

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The Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy
National Academy of Sciences
National Research Council

presents

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A Workshop Sponsored by:

The Spencer Foundation,
The U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
and Office of Special Education Programs, and
The Foundation for Child Development

April 6-7, 1999
Washington, D.C.

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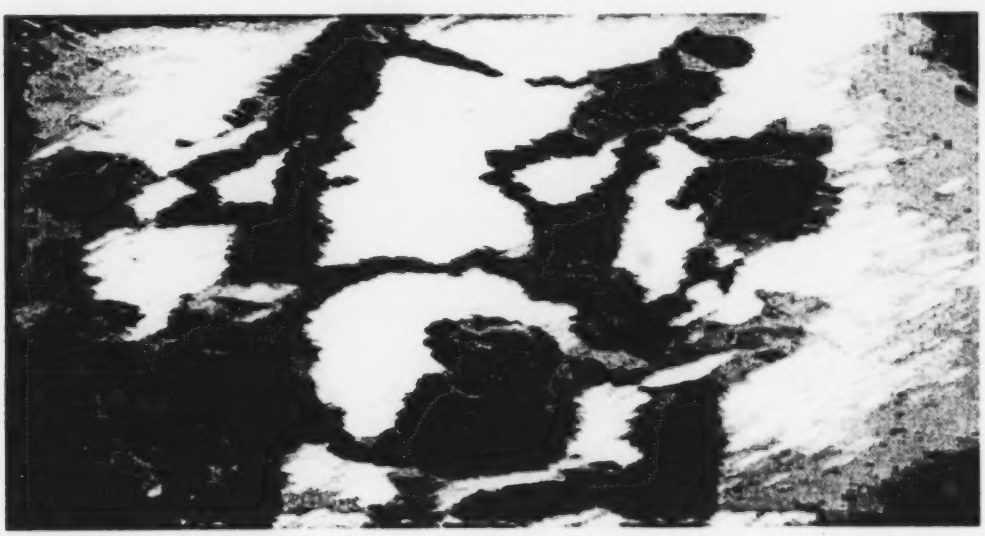

AGENDA

Tuesday, April 6, 1999

8:00	**CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
8:45-9:00	Welcome and Opening remarks: Alexandra Wigdor, Deputy Director, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education Barbara Bowman, Chair, Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy
9:00-10:15	Keynote Address: Jerome Bruner
10:15-11:30	Presentation: Sheila Kamerman *Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC): Preschool Policies and Programs in the OECD Countries*
11:30-12:30	Panel Discussion Carollee Howes and Barbara Bowman
12:30-1:30	**LUNCH (BOXED)**
1:30-2:45	Presentation: Rebecca New *Italian Early Childhood Education: Variations on a Cultural Theme*
2:45-4:00	Panel Discussion Jerome Bruner and Lilian Katz
4:00-5:00	Roundtable Discussions: Informal discussions on various issues for guests to meet and exchange ideas

Wednesday, April 7, 1999

8:30-9:00 **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

9:00-10:15 Presentation: Cigdem Kigitcibasi
Early Learning and Human Development: The Turkish Early Enrichment Program

10:15-11:30 Panel Discussion:
Robert Myers and Robert LeVine

11:30-12:30 **LUNCH (BOXED)**

12:30-1:45 Presentation: Susan Holloway
Beyond the "Average Native": Cultural Models of Early Childhood Education in Japan

1:45-3:00 Panel Discussion
Bernard Spodek and Sharon Lynn Kagan

3:00-4:00 Informal roundtable networking and discussions

4:00-5:00 Closing remarks and discussion

BACKGROUND

In his 1889 address to the Chicago Kindergarten College, William Torrey Harris warned early childhood educators not to fall into either of two extremes in teaching young children. On the one hand, he condemned the "sub-primary school" model in which children are "drilled to such an extent on some academic topic that [they] become fixated on it alone, as when a teacher's focus on counting over understanding mathematical relationships leads children to love to count better than to think of causal relationships." On the other hand, Harris criticized the "laissez faire" approach in which teachers demand too little of their students, and where children are consequently insufficiently challenged to learn and grow.

Over one hundred years later, Harris' warnings remains relevant and the wisdom of his foresight seems evident. Current debates among early childhood educators, though informed by a century of research in the social and biological sciences, remain poised on the same central questions, and a consensus has yet to be reached on how to answer these questions. Theory, research and evaluation reports within different fields have accumulated; however, this work has yet to be studied as a whole by cross-disciplinary teams of scientists and practitioners.

The National Research Council has assembled a committee of experts, *the Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy*, to accomplish this very important goal. This committee is currently assessing recent scientific advances on early childhood education across fields and around the globe as they apply to children between the ages of two and five. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement and Office of Special Education Programs have sponsored the establishment of this committee and charged it with the mission of identifying the implications of the assembled knowledge from the social and behavioral sciences for early childhood education, and for teacher training and certification.

The study undertaken by the Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy is driven by the following basic questions:

1. What can and should we teach young children?

2. How is it best to teach them?

3. How do we measure their learning?

To address these questions, the Committee has been carrying out the following tasks:

- Reviewing and synthesizing theory, research, and applications in the social and behavioral sciences such as psychology, cognitive neuroscience, education, public

policy, anthropology, linguistics, and sociology, which contribute to our understanding of early childhood pedagogy.

- Reviewing research concerning special populations such as children living in poverty, children with limited English proficiency, children with disabilities in order to highlight early childhood education practices which are effective in enhancing the development of these children.

- Producing a coherent distillation of the knowledge base, and developing its implications for pedagogy, the training of teachers and child care professionals, and practice in early childhood education programs.

- Drawing out major policy implications of the research findings.

- Preparing a research agenda to guide the Department of Education in developing program directions and funding priorities.

Global Perspectives Workshop

In recognition of the fact that many historically significant contributions to this field have been made by educators and scholars in countries other than the United States, a workshop on *Global Perspectives on Early Childhood Education* has being organized in order to accomplish the following goals:

- to bring together leading experts on preschool education and early learning in other countries whose knowledge base will be incorporated into the larger study, and

- to stimulate the exchange of ideas on early childhood education by providing an opportunity for early childhood educators, researchers, and policy experts from around the world to meet and discuss common concerns.

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Global Perspectives on Early Childhood Education: Keynote Address

Jerome Bruner

I gather that the Committee assigned the task of preparing a Report for the National Academy of Sciences on *Early Childhood Pedagogy* has been presented with three guiding questions to which answers are requested. Here they are in the summary form in which they were circulated:

1. What can/should children learn?

2. How can/should we teach them these things?

3. How is it best to assess their learning?

Presumably, the first question relates to *content;* the second to *method;* the third to *evaluation.* From a political point of view, of course, this is the canonical way of putting questions about matters relating to schooling. And by now we all recognize that schooling, particularly in the United States, is an intensely political issue. But I deeply doubt whether questions such as these can fruitfully *guide* our inquiry into the nature and functions of early education, however much they may provide category labels for grouping myriad illustrations of how those three questions might be fruitfully answered. For *how* we answer such questions depends upon our first taking into account much deeper issues about the formation of young minds in the cultural contexts where, eventually, people will have to live, work, love, and spend their days.

Let me illustrate my point with an anecdote from life -- one that I'm sure that Becky New will be able to elaborate upon later, for it relates to preschools in Reggio Emilia in Italy where both of us spend a good deal of time, both geographically *in situ* and vicariously by e-mail. In that lively little city, there is a dedicated band of pre-school teachers and pedagogistas who, over the last decades, have rightly earned a world-wide reputation for dealing courageously with the kinds of challenges that pre-schools must face every day. This does not mean that they don't make errors, but only that they do not shun difficult questions.

After my second or third day of sitting there in one of those Reggio preschools for the first time some years ago, just observing how they went about their business, I had one of those shocks of recognition: I realized I was beholding a small miracle. A particular teacher was working with a group of kids. Every time she asked a kid something, she *waited* until he answered. And if there was any hesitation in his replying, she rephrased or elaborated the query, taking the burden of discourse on herself, waiting for a response. If she didn't understand the answer the kid might offer, she said right out, still bearing the burden, what it was about the answer that still puzzled her, inviting the kid to help her a little more in understanding what he had meant. If there were any uncertainties left, she might then ask the other kids to help clarify what the first kid might have meant, always checking with the kid who'd been asked the questions whether that's what he had indeed meant.

It could not have been plainer to the particular kid and to the others as well, that putting and answering a question was an occasion for mutual interest and respect. Questions

made sense, and so did answers. All the felicity conditions on questive speech acts were being honored. The small group in which this was all happening was working on an ingenious shadow casting "game" trying to figure out the sizes and shapes of shadows cast by geometric figures -- not an easy problem, you may recall from Physics 1!

Anyway, my exemplary teacher typically followed up the answers that a kid offered by asking him or her how they'd come to it, or if a particular kid said he didn't know how, she'd ask other kids if they could help figure it out. The tacit assumption (without it ever being stated) was that there were *reasons* for answers, that answers and reasons were products of thought -- that *how* you got to an answer was just as important as what answer you'd got to.

There was nothing particularly unusual about this little episode. It was the standard *cortesia* of classroom discourse there in the flagship Diana preschool, right there in the little park in the very center of Reggio Emilia, right next door to the Teatro Valle, Reggio's columned opera house; right across from the Teatro Ariosto named for Reggio's ancient favorite son, author of *Orlando Furioso;* and kitty-corner from the elegant Palladian regional headquarters of the Banca d'Italia. Kids in Reggio do not get second class courtesy.

So what was being taught, what was the subject content and what the teaching method in that "lesson"? Was it an introduction to the theory of light taught by "hands-on" demonstration? Is that something that kids "can/should learn"? Any better than a "unit," say, on how real life differs from play-acted life in the theater? Better or worse than a unit on how to turn a wooded playground by the Arcobolena preschool into an amusement park for the birds? Either of those, like that little miracle at the Diana that I told you about, could be (and should be) called a lesson in *taking discourse seriously,* in treating knowledge and the effort after knowledge as human and real and effortful. There was no "big deal" made about whether an answer was "right" but only whether it was reasonable or reasoned. And behind all this, there was the deep discourse lesson: that when you ask a question, you wait for an answer, and when you're asked one, you think about it and answer as best you can. And even more subtly, it was a lesson in the philosophy of language, in what the philosopher John Searle has dubbed the "Statability Theorem" which, briefly, is "Whatever you mean can be said." And that covers "wrong answers" too, because on closer inspection they mean something too if you can find it out.

One last thing about the little miracle. The whole group got into the act each time it was necessary to clarify or judge any kid's particular answer. A natural little community of learners or problem solvers was being created and sustained. I won't go into that now, only to say that the "community" idea is so much part of those Reggio schools that the kids even rotate in taking charge of the seating and serving of the school lunch each day. And I just happen to know that as much time is spent in selecting kitchen help for those preschools as in selecting teachers. Yes, lunch is part of the curriculum.

That first year in Reggio, we had regular "Friday seminars" where teachers and pedagogistas got together to talk about the week. At the very first one, I was asked what had struck me most in what I'd observed thus far. I told them that little story about the shadow casting. I think they were a bit embarrassed by my simple mindedness, and tried to explain to me, *straniero* that I was, that this was just ordinary courtesy extended to kids, *mollo reggiano*. And how did I like the "amusement park for the birds" at Arcoboleno?

So to what "subject matter" does all this belong -- or to what subject *doesn't* it belong? And what pedagogical method is it, being courteous? Not much about it in the NAEYC manuals on Developmentally Appropriate Practice, the renowned DAP, both the 1987 and the 1997 editions. Nor can I find much about it in Piaget or Vygotsky, nor alas, in Bruner and his many colleagues at work all over the world these days. I'm sure Anne Brown would say that something like this lies at the heart of a "community of learners," an idea she has done so much to facilitate.

I'm sure that many good nursery schools -- whether explicitly or implicitly -- extend this kind of courtesy to their children. But believe me, it is not "doin' what comes naturally," to borrow a line from that great anthropological musical, *Annie Get Your Gun*. *It* is certainly, how shall I say, *an act of pedagogy*. But pedagogy is an extension of culture, or perhaps even better, a specialization of it. Indeed, it is a crucially important specialization. Without it, we would simply fail to pass on the culture at large, to enable human beings to use effectively the vast resources that any and any culture has on offer for those within its ambit.

I have one other reason for starting my reflections this morning with the "extension of intellectual courtesy" as fundamental to pedagogy. I want to mention it briefly before passing on to other pressing matters. There is a great deal of accumulating evidence that babies become human beings because they are treated like human beings. We treat them *as if* they understood us before, in fact, they do understand, impute human traits to them with not a shred of evidence that they have them. Parents delight in "discovering" that their babies have minds (though they have as much of a hand in putting them there as God did), and firmly treat them as if they did have them, despite the objection of philosophers. It even turns out that if you treat a bonobo chimpanzee in like vein -- as if he had a mind, as if he understood and had intentions and subjectivity -- he too (his name is Kanzi and he lives in Atlanta, Georgia under the tutelage of Sue Savage-Rumbaugh and her gallant group of assistants) he too will begin acting much more like a human being than bonobos are supposed to. Kanzi, indeed, finally became frustrated almost beyond measure at his natural raised sister for her inability to "get it."

So let me plant a small moral before passing on. A key aspect of successful pedagogy is treating those in your charge as if they were already on the way to being what you'd like them to become -- not just butchers and bakers and candlestick makers, not even painters, physicists, and CEOs, but also members of the culture trying to use their minds and their words appropriately.

We are in a revolution where our understanding of early childhood is concerned. For one thing, all manner of learning, all manner of cognitive activity starts earlier than ever we thought. And for another, later learning depends upon or is rooted in earlier learning far more than ever we suspected. Not many people are shocked any longer by the hyperbole that "Any child can be taught any subject at any age in some form that is honest." Even the 1987 NAEYC-DAP volume recognized that more complex and abstract knowledge grows out of or can be used to render more intuitive knowledge more derivationally generative. And the NAEYC even asserts that it is indeed "developmentally appropriate" to link new knowledge to old in teaching young kids.

All of which is rather reminiscent of the "spiral curriculum," of an earlier age, something like a "course of study" extending over longer periods of time and planned with a view to the progressive empowerment of the child. The "heavy" version of this is. of course. those famous lines of pre-requisite courses in college. I remember taking the course in sociology so I could take the next one down the line in "social pathology," only to discover that the professors in the two courses were talking about two different universes in two incommensurately different languages. No, I'm not talking about "prequisites in the pre-school." So let me back up a moment and say what I do mean.

I was involved in an interview study on NYU undergraduates, probing them about their educational experiences in grade and high school -- what they had liked, what made their best and worst teachers best and worst, their sense of continuity in what they were learning, any feelings of intellectual empowerment their education gave them, and so on. I'm only now beginning to analyze the responses. But I can tell you that my early impression is of a chaos of sound bites -- a certain grade teacher was "fun," another had good discussions in class, still another had "a wonderful sense of humor." Now, I know full well that we are often unaware of what we know or about the deep lines of continuity that make our knowledge cohere. As the old Latin adage has it, *"Scientia in mores dependit,"* "Knowledge gets converted into habits," and it's in the nature of habits that we don't know we have them -- which is why writers like Erving Goff man and William Labov have such an appeal in producing what Jean Piaget used to call "la prise de conscience," best rendered as *defamiliarization,* bringing something back into mind again.

This must sound terribly highbrow in the context of "early pedagogy," preschool. But I can easily bring it down from the clouds. I want to take a leaf from Anne Brown again. plus another from a distinguished Polish-French psychologist-psychiatrist, Ignace Meyerson, who died in 1983 at the age of 95 and whose work is only now coming to be fully appreciated in France. First Anne. In her Oakland experimental schools, an hour each Friday was given over to "Where did we get this week?" And indeed, with the help of kids and teachers, some record was set down of what was concluded. These were mostly ghetto kids, ages 10 to 12. It was extraordinarily impressive (and surprisingly passionate) this end of the week creation of a joint memory. Now to Meyerson, whose principal impact until recently has been to inspire the famous *Annales* school of French historians (including Philippe Aries whose *Centuries of Childhood* you all know), with their emphasis upon the

formation of *mentalités*. Meyerson's principal doctrine is that human culture or civilization depends upon the creation of *oeuvres*, externalized "works" -- whether the little marking events of a neighborhood, bodies of law. literary products, or whatever absorbs a collective effort in its product. These serve not only as "landmarks" but as foci for growth and change -- English common law being perhaps one of the most striking examples, with its central doctrine of *stare decisis* (if you'll permit me to where my Law School hat for a moment).

Well, Anne Brown's "Friday reflections" are an example of *on-going oeuvre production*. invitations to consider "what it's all been about." It is the prophylactic against the mindless accretion of sound-bites, the headful of junk. It, reflection, is what turns a "spiral curriculum" back on itself, connecting the before, the now, and what next. We need it in our schools, to create a continuity from class to class, from year to year, from a first version to a next more powerful one, from the Tortoise and the Hare to (eventually) differential calculus.

I know that such a procedure have limits where preschooler are concerned. But I doubt whether they are severe as all that. Several of us studied the recorded after-bedtime monologues of a two-to-three-year-old, Emmy, taken on audio by a recording machine under her bed. She was a chatterbox. But note that much of her chatter was in the form of reflections on her day, what she made of it, what was unusual about it, and the rest. In Nelson Goodman's phrase, she was "world-making," in Meyerson's oeuvre constructing. She was, in a word, "going meta." And everything we've learned in recent years about the development of intelligence virtually shouts from the housetop about the importance of this kind of reflective 'going meta." If any subject can be taught at any age in some form that is honest, then the art of reflection is surely among them. But it is not just the development of intelligence that's at issue. So let me change focus to get to that matter.

I want to say a few words about Self construction as an aim of preschool participation. Doubtless, Self gets constructed in the course of just navigating the ordinary, if only in some minimal way. But in some other way, Self or Identity or however one wants to call it, is also a loose theory or more or less closely connected set of narratives about whom we're connected to, what we're capable of doing, where we belong, what puts us off, what we can rely on, and so on. Self, in a word, is "located": it is *inside*, somehow connected with your bodily self, but "inside" makes sense only by connection with a lot of *outside* things: people, possessions, places, permissions, prohibitions. I don't want to get into a discussion about the growth of Self, but I do want to relate it to pre-school education.

For it is in preschool that the child makes his debut into the world beyond the immediate family. Some debut! But hold on: it is at this point that the danger of a real disjunction of Self arises: the child in school and the child *out of* school. Most of those undergraduate I mentioned earlier whose interviews I've been analyzing, seem to have an almost total disjunction. "Almost" because, as you can guess, parents cared how well kids did in school -- and at that, according to my interviews, mostly in a negative way of being peeved when kids did poorly or got into "school trouble." Mostly, what went on *in school* had little bearing on what went on outside. There was a school Self and then something else.

This disjunction is exacerbated, of course, when the child in question comes from a home (or neighborhood setting) marginal to the school -- ethnically, racially, and/or socio-economically. So the school Self (and what is learned in school under its agency) becomes alien from an everyday Self. Too often, besides, what is learned in school is learned principally to please or stay out of trouble with the school. So, unlike the Euro, school learning turns into a currency that can't be traded for anything anywhere else. Even under good conditions, its trading value is simply for getting into the next grade, getting graduated, getting into college, getting ambitious parents off your back. All of that, to be sure, may be a bit exaggerated for, of course, there are breakthroughs, but these mostly occur through what, significantly, we call "extracurricular activities."

Now come back to the nursery-schooler. In my study of British nursery schools and playgroups (and I'm sure the same holds here in America) there was often a professionally burnished wall between inside and outside: you dropped your kid at the door, murmured a few words of greeting, and departed. I want to shift back to Reggio for a moment. The preschools there on now launched on a program for parents -- to talk about problems of raising kids, about school and home, about lots of other unpredictable things. There has been a good deal of consultation with psychologists, psychiatrists, and pediatricians about how to go about this tricky business, for these parent groups take on lots of different forms. They even turn into something like school coops, wit h parents even volunteering to make props for the kids' "entertainment park for the birds" at the Arcobolena. But what they are, most often, is a form of "consciousness raising," very reminiscent of those consciousness raising groups in the opening stages of the women's movement, though turned now to the question of what its really like raising kids. And you can translate this, if you please, into how you grow connecting links between a kid's School Self and her other Selves. The first step, I want to propose, is to find some way of breaching that burnished wall between *inside* school and *outside*.

But you can't just do this at preschool and then quit. Signor Berlinguer, the Italian Minister of Public Instruction, said to me in despair last year, that the two great success stories in education are preschool/nursery-schools and advanced graduate education, the two of them bearing an interesting resemblance to each other. And I want to assure you (as if I had to!) that what you'll find in a good graduate seminar at Stanford or Bologna or, indeed, at the New York University or Yale Law Schools, would do credit to a really good nursery school anywhere. And do not be deceived into the lazy thinking that it is only because graduate students are "well prepared" or "carefully selected." For it is often the case that the graduate students who are *best* prepared and who have the highest GRE scores, are the very brands who are hardest to save from the burning. I think the real answer, rather, is that, at last, the students (and their teachers) are now involved in what they see as their "lives," the wholeness of their being -- just like preschoolers launching into "real" life from "home" life. In the case of law students, for example, they're even ready to put up with those usually dreary big classes in torts, contracts, criminal and civil procedure: "black letter law," as they call it. But only if they also have a sense of where! it all fits into "lawyering," to use another

piece of our local jargon. Indeed, to be unashamedly autobiographical, I have to report that the happiest, most fulfilling experience of my entire intellectual life was my first year of graduate school -- I could scarcely believe the change that had taken place! Alas, I had no corresponding experience as a preschooler, though I can report that my first-grade experience was the most baffling of my intellectual life: I simply couldn't figure out what it was about! Not surprisingly, I was "left back," as non-promotion was then called.

So let me spend my last minutes talking about the that preschools are supposed to be preparing children for, and how taking thought on that subject may lead us to some questions more searching than those posed to the Committee referred to the start of this talk.

I want to begin with the story, perhaps apocryphal, that when Head Start first began, one of its unintended consequences was that children who had attended them more often developed school phobias on being sent to regular public schools than did those who hadn't begun as Head Starters, that a more benign preschool experience had disprepared them for the more rigid routines of early grade school. I've never seen any data on the matter, but perhaps you have. I know there has been a first step taken for providing training for teachers in the early primary grades of the State schools in the methods of the Commune's preschools. I should explain that Reggio's preschools are financed by the Commune, Regggio and its catchment area, while the primary schools are financed and controlled by the National Ministry in Rome. I also happen to know that the Minister of Public Instruction in Rome is delighted with this move, though he is constrained from saying much about it publicly, since the issue of national versus local authority is as hot a political issue in Italy as is the Federal-State balance of control in America.

The underlying issue, of course, is what are schools *for?* In Cologno-Monzese, an industrial exurb near Milan with a large proportion of immigrants from Italy's *Mezzogiornio,* the impoverished South, a committee of parents and teachers, with the backing from the Mayor, decided to reform the local schools because so many of the children were experiencing failure. The resulting humiliation was turning them to violence, and even girls were becoming members of toughy street gangs. To legitimize the committee's efforts, their leaders even arranged a hook-up telecast town meeting in Cologno Monzese, including a link to New York with me and Luisa Passerini, one of Italy's leading historians of the Italian Labor Movement and of the Red Brigades. She happened to be a visiting professor at NYU and Columbia that year -- *last* year. Our function, I think, was to agree that some action should indeed be taken, *could* be taken, and that the function of the schools must *never* be to defeat and humiliate the young in their charge. It was not difficult to agree with that! Nor difficult to agree with their ideas about after-school and summer tutoring, or local parental involvement to help free teachers for more teaching, or more open discussion about Cologno Monzese's problems. A year later, they are making some progress. At very least, there has been consciousness raising, not just locally, but by coverage in such well-read national papers as *La Reppublica.*

Now, we have every reason to believe that well-run Head Start's make a difference in the later lives of the children who attend them -- the testimony of the High Scope study, and of other less well documented ones. No matter what kinds of schools they go to later. Indeed, the High Scope study indicates that the added expense of improving Head Start classes pays back just by increasing the chance of high school completion, thereby improving later employment prospects. It even makes it back by dint of ex-Head Starters not ending in jail as often. I am not knocking Head Start or other preschools.

What I am saying is that their chances of success would be greatly increased by a follow-up in subsequent school years: a more integrated, continuous curriculum (our old friend, the spiral curriculum); smaller classes that enable an opportunity for both intellectual courtesy and for more reflection in the style of Anne Brown's weekly retrospects; a more permeable border between school and world; extra help for the less advantaged kids, whether after-school or during the summer (as the President has proposed); and more concern for Self-building, a better sense of one's own agency and worth. But above all, consciousness-raising about schools, schooling, education, about what school is for. *Pace* the Charlottesville Declaration, but you do not involve children and their parents or the local community by declaring, probably falsely at that, that America's position in world markets depends on kids doing tops in math and science. In fact, our position in world markets became steadily better without the slightest sign of our improving our international league position in these "tough" subjects. From all signs, it is probably our sociocultural infrastructure and our capacity for dealing easily with each other in work groups that makes it possible to organize American industry so well and so profitably. I'm not against math and science, obviously, but our we minding the rest of the store, cultivating our more viable virtues?

If I have a keynote message, it is this. The main aim in preschool education is to cultivate the process of development. In the preschool years, development depends upon coming to recognize and appreciate one's own capacities to solve problems and to recognize and respect the wobbly processes by which we do so. To do these puzzling things, we need a social setting that, to use one of my favorite terms, *scaffolds* our efforts. We must learn to connect our inner sense of self with a cultural surround that enables us to use our minds, and *enablement* is the word. The discourse that language provides -- not just syntax or semantics, but *discourse* -- is an essential component of this. That was why I began with the little miracle of an example from Reggio Emilia. And as Loris Malaguzzi, the originating force behind those Reggio schools, once put it, there are a thousand languages/discourses of childhood.

So it is a cop-out to ask *what* can or should preschool children learn. They can learn anything we can offer with courtesy and allure that enlists their imagination -- and again, at any age in some form that is honest. Of course they can learn math and science if those "subjects" are offered appropriately. How many times do we have to demonstrate that! And every time we demonstrate it, must we take seriously the latest so-called failure to replicate? Once an existence theorem is established, the burden of proof shifts to the other guy. **Or**

computer literacy? Watch Mike Cole's after-school clubs with the kids working in league with a bright undergraduate mentor-wizard.

The real reply to the What Question is twofold. First, is a unit of subject matter useful for cultivating mind and sensibility in a young child -- and that seems to depend upon ingenuity and good faith. But more important is "What do you want to build on it later?" And we should not countenance answers that include the phrase "build world markets." Howard Gardner proposes that there are six, seven, or eight "forms" of intelligence. Perhaps we should provide early offerings in those to help those kids who are good at one or two of them to recognize their talents -- but not just in nursery school! Let us stop fretting that cultivating a talent means producing an idiot savant. I am married to a graduate of the famous Bronx High School; she had better literature teachers there than ever I had! I had a research assistant a few years back who attended the famous Moscow High School of Mathematics. This autumn she was appointed a Vice President of the Bankers Trust Company for her phenomenal intuitions about how world markets move.

Let me urge that we use the present occasion to make recommendations about the *content, methods, and evaluation* of preschool education. But let us not be hobbled into thinking that preschools, are an end in themselves. They are preschools. The deeper issue -- after we have made our point about cultivating development as I and others have discussed it -- is to think through what kinds of later schools are preschools preparing for!

I end with an apology. I have not mentioned (at least not explicitly) the special problems of *multiculturalism*. Nor do I want now in my last paragraph, as it were, to take a quick lick at it. All I want to say is that multiculturalism is not, deeply not a *special* problem. It has been with us since the birth of the nation; it is the haunting theme of our great novels; it is the life-blood of our culture. We have lived on strangers forever -- often hating them partly because we need them. For centuries we made some of them slaves, and we are still adept at enslaving them by economic means. What I have said about preschool education holds generally for self-defined "native" as for other-defined "foreigner." I know that there are "special" problems, but they are like excrescences on the more general problem of how anybody ever achieves an *American* identity.

Early Childhood Education and Care: Preschool Policies and Programs in the OECD Countries

Sheila B. Kamerman

Introduction

The full paper provides a picture of early childhood education and care (ECEC) in the OECD countries, primarily Europe and North America. Its main objective is to present an overview of the major policies and programs in these countries and classify them by their most salient characteristics. A secondary objective is to document the quantity and quality of care provided. The paper begins by defining the terms of discussion of ECEC internationally, provides a brief historical overview, and then lays out the policy and program choices that have been made regarding ECEC for young children. The fourth section is a brief summary of the different "models" that have emerged across the countries, reflecting alternative policy strategies and approaches to delivering ECEC and illustrating how different countries have "packaged" these strategies. The paper concludes with a brief discussion of trends and emerging issues.

This excerpted part focuses on ECCE programs for 2 or 3 year olds to 5-7 year olds, when compulsory school begins in these countries.

Definition of Terms

The *ECEC programs* described in this paper include a wide range of part-day and full-day programs under education, health, and social welfare auspices, funded and delivered in a variety of ways in both the public and private sectors. The major cross-national differences have to do with such variables as: the locus of policy-making authority (national or local); administrative auspice (education or social welfare); age group served (preschoolers only; infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers) and other eligibility criteria (poor; with working parents); funding strategies (government, employer, parent fees; combination); delivery strategies (supply or demand); locus of care (pre-primary school or center), primary caregiver (professional; paraprofessional); and program philosophy.

The ECEC programs discussed here include pre- or pre-primary schools (kindergartens, pre-kindergartens, compensatory education programs, and nursery schools), child care or day care centers, and, as relevant, licensed or regulated family-type day care. Infant and toddler care programs, informal care, and programs for children with special needs are not addressed .

ECEC policy includes the whole range of government actions designed to influence the supply of and/or demand for ECEC and the quality of services provided. These government activities include direct delivery of ECEC services; direct and indirect financial subsidies to private providers, such as grants, contracts, and tax incentives; financial subsidies to parents both direct and indirect, such as cash benefits and allowances to pay for the services, or tax benefits to offset the costs, or cash benefits that permit parents to remain at home (and stop working) without loss of income; and the establishment and enforcement of regulations. These policies are discussed only insofar as they specifically affect the pattern of ECEC service delivery in the different countries.

Table 1:
Percent of Married/Cohabiting Mothers and Lone Mothers, Employed in Selected OECD Countries (Most Recent Available Data), and Percentage of Young Children in out of Home ECEC (Selected Countries)

Country	Married/ cohabiting mothers (%)	Lone mothers (%)	Percentage (%) of children by age in ECEC (full and part day)		Compulsory school age (years)
			0-3	3-6	
Australia	56	43	--	80	--
Austria	46	58	3	80	6
Belgium	61	68	30	97	6
Denmark	84	69	58*	83	7
Finland	70	65	48*	73	7
France	68	82	29	99	6
Germany	41	40	5	85	6
Ireland	32	23	2	55	6
Italy	41	69	6	95	6
Japan	54	87	21	52	6
Luxembourg	45	73	N/A	N/A	6
Netherlands	52	40	8	71	5
New Zealand	58	27	@25	85	6
Norway	77	61	N/A	N/A	7
Portugal	55	50	12	48	6
Spain	38	68	5	84	6
Sweden	80	70	48*	79	7
U.K.	62	41	2	60**	5
U.S.	68	66	26	71	5-7 (varies by state)

Source: Female Labor Force Participate Data; OECD. Family, Market and Community. Paris, France: OECD, 1997. Table 3.1, p. 83. Child Care Data, Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn research; European Commission Childcare Network, 1996.

* From age 1, when basic paid leave ends; but all three have supplementary paid and job protected parental or child rearing leaves.

** 3 and 4 year olds, because compulsory school begins at age 5.

The Historical Context

ECEC policies and programs in the OECD countries have evolved out of remarkably similar historical streams, including child protection, early childhood education, services for children with special needs, and services to facilitate mothers' labor force participation (Berfenstam, et al., 1973; Pistillo, 1989; Kellmer-Pringle and Naidoo, 1974; David & Lezine, 1973). In all the countries, one overarching theme is the movement from private charity, beginning in the early and middle 19th century to public responsibility, evolving largely after World War II. The extent of public responsibility does vary, however, across the countries. However, it is the relative emphasis given in public policy to custodial care of poor and disadvantaged children of working mothers, on the one hand, and education and socialization of all children, on the other, that appears to be the most distinguishing variation[1]

Over time, education became dominant for 3-5 year olds in France and Italy, as well as many of the other continental European countries, because of national policies and public priorities. Social welfare day care emerged as the dominant mode for the under 3s in these countries and for the 0-6 year olds in Sweden and other Nordic countries, also as a result of national policies, public priorities and pressure, but in response to demographic trends as well. In the Anglo-American countries, two parallel streams (education and day care) continued, in part because of the absence of national policy supporting education early on and in part, perhaps, because of the continued ambivalence about where primary responsibility for child rearing and socialization should lie.[2]

The Major Policy Dimensions[3]

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1 Compulsory education for primary school was enacted in Britain in the 1870s, in France in 1882, in Sweden in 1842, in Italy in 1860 and in Germany in the U.S. in the 1870s and 1880s.

2 In addition, in the U.S. as in several other countries, there was an additional factor, namely the division of responsibilities between federal and state governments and the allocation of responsibility for education assigned to state governments.

3 This section draws on our own (Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn) earlier research, and on: Peter Moss, Coordinator, European Commission Network on Childcare. A Review of Services for Young Children in the European Union 1990-1995. Brussels, Belgium,1996. John Ditch, et al. European Observatory on National Family Policies, Developments in National Family Policies in 1995 and A Synthesis of National Family Policies 1995. York, Eng.: University of York, 1996, as well as our ongoing monitoring activities.

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Table 2: ECEC Policy Dimensions in Selected OECD Countries

Country	Locus of policy making	Admin. auspice	Age group served	Eligibility criteria	Funding strategies	Delivery strategies
Austria	State/ local	Welfare	3 - 6 0 - 3	Working parents	State and local gov't and parent fees.	Supply
Belgium	State	Education	$2^1/_2$ - 6	Universal	Gov't - free	Supply
		Welfare (Center and FDC)	under 3	Working parents, with special needs, poor	Multiple incl. gov't, employer, parent fees, income-related.	Mixed
Canada	State	Education	5 - 6	Universal;	Gov't - free.	Mixed
		Welfare	under 5	Working parents, poor, with special needs	Mixed, largely parent fees.	
Denmark	National and local	Education	5 - 7	Universal	Gov't.	Supply
		Welfare	6 mos. - 6 yrs.	Working parents	Gov't (local) Parent fees income-related - max. 20-30% of costs.	
Finland	National and local	Education	6	Universal	Nat'l and local gov't.	Mixed
		Welfare	1 - 7	Universal for working parents	Parent fees income related @ 10% of costs.	
France	National (primarily) and local	Education	2 - 6	Universal	Gov't-free to parents.	Supply
		Health/ welfare	3 mos. - 3 yrs.	Working parents, with special needs	Mixed local gov't, family allowance, and parent fees income related, max 25% of costs.	Mixed
Germany	State	Education	3 - 6	Universal	State and local gov't plus parent fees (income related, max 16-20% of costs).	Supply
		Welfare	under 3	With special needs, poor, working parents		

Table 2 (continued):
ECEC Policy Dimensions in Selected OECD Countries

Country	Locus of policy making	Admin. auspice	Age group served	Eligibility criteria	Funding strategies	Delivery strategies
Italy	National	Education	3 - 6	Universal	Nat'l gov't, free.	Supply
	Local	Health/ welfare	under 3	Working parents	Local gov't and parent fees, income related, average 12% of costs, max 20%.	
New Zealand	National	Education	under 6	Universal	National gov't and parent fees.	Supply
Spain	State/ Local	Education	0 - 6	Universal (3-6)	Gov't, free.	Supply
			under 3		Gov't and parent fees, income related; max 20% of costs	Modest tax benefit for low income parents
Sweden	National and local (primarily)	Education	0 - 6	Universal, working parents, with special needs	National and local gov't. Parent fees, income related; about 13% of costs.	Supply
U.K.	National/ local	Education	3 - 4		Gov't, free	Supply & demand
		Welfare	0 - 4	With special needs, poor	Free or income related fees.	
U.S.	National/ local	Education	5	Universal	State and local gov't.	Largely demand, also supply
		Education and welfare	0 - 4	With special needs, Poor, Welfare, Working parents	Federal/state/local gov't. Parent fees cover @ 76% of costs.	

Table 3:
ECEC by Auspice, Age of Child, Locus of Care, Quality, and Access/Coverage

Country	Auspice	Age	Locus of Care	Quality	Access/ Coverage (%)[a]
Austria	Welfare Public or private, non profit	3 - 6	Preschool	No national standards; Vary by state: Staff child ratios 3:20.	80%
		0 - 3	Centers	1.7:14 FDC Home, max 7 staff.	3%
Belgium	Education	2½ - 6	Preschool	1:19; 1.5:20-25.	97%
	Welfare Public or nonprofit	under 3	Centers	2½:7 (incl. .5 nurse) in centers; 3-4 ch. max in FDC Homes.	30%
Canada	Education	5 - 6	Preschool	Set by Province.	50%
	Welfare Public; non-profit and for profit	under 5	Centers and FDC Homes		45%
Denmark	Education	6 - 7	Preschool	set locally.	100%[b]
	Welfare Largely public	6 mos. - 6 yrs.	Centers and FDC Homes (esp. for under 3s)	generally, 1:5.5, 3-6	3-6: 83%[c]
				1:2.7, under 3.	0-3: 58%[a]
Finland	Welfare; largely public	1 - 7	Centers and FDC Homes (also for under 3s)	1:7, 3-7 year olds	3-6: 73%[d]
				1:4, under 3s FDC Homes, max 4 preschoolers	1-3: 48%

[a] The age of entry and access/coverage need to be seen in the context of the duration of the maternity/parental leave.
[b] Some also attend child care center for part of day.
[c] All children one year old and older with working parents, now guaranteed a place in subsidized care.
[d] All children under 7 with working parents, now guaranteed a place in subsidized care if they wish.

Table 3 (continued):
Child Care by Auspice, Age of Child, Locus of Care, Quality, and Access/Coverage

Country	Auspice	Age	Locus of Care	Quality	Access/ Coverage (%)[a]
France	Education	2 - 6	Preschool	National health, safety, and staffing standards. 1:10 2 year olds 1:27 others staff = teachers	3-6: 99%
	Largely public health and welfare	3 mos. - 3 yrs.	Preschool, centers and FDC Homes	1:8 toddlers 1:5 infants 1:3 FDC	2-3: 35% 0-3: 29%
Germany	Education, public and private non-profit	3 - 6	Preschool	1:10-14	85%[c]
	Welfare; public and private non-profit	under 3	Center and FDC (largely)	1:5-7.5	5% (West German States) 50% (East German States)
Italy	Education	3 - 6	Preschool	3:25	95%
	Welfare, public and private non-profit	under 3	Center	no national standards 1:3 under 3s is customary in most regions.	6%
Spain	Education, public and private non-profit	0 - 6	Preschool	National standards 1:25 3-6 yr olds	3-6: 84%
			Center	1:18 2-3 yr olds 1:10 toddlers 1:7 infants 1/3 staff "trained"	0-3: 5%

[a] The age of entry and access/coverage need to be seen in the context of the duration of the maternity/parental leave.
[c] Coverage in kindergarten for all children 3-6 is the goal.

Table 3 (continued):
Child Care by Auspice, Age of Child, Locus of Care, Quality, and Access/Coverage

Country	Auspice	Age	Locus of Care	Quality	Access/ Coverage (%)[a]
Sweden	Education, largely public	0 - 6[f]	Center	No national standards; local government sets standards. 2: $3^1/_2$ children 3-6	3-6: 79%
			Centers and FDC Homes	1:3-5 children under 3 FDC: 1:4-8	1-3: 48%[a]
U.K.	Education Welfare public, private, non-profit, and for profit	3 - 4 0 - 4[g]	Preschool Centers and FDC Homes	2:26 National standards 1:4 for 2-3s 1:3 for under 2s	3-4: 60%
U.S.	Education	5 - 6	Preschool	No national standards State standards vary widely	95% of 5 year olds @ 50% of 3-4 year olds in either preschool or center care
	Education and Welfare Largely for profit and private non-profit	0 - 4	Preschool and Centers; FDC for under 3s.	32 states require 1:4 ratios for infants. Half the states have 1:5 (or lower) ratios for toddlers.	0-3: 26%

[a] The age of entry and access/coverage need to be seen in the context of the duration of the maternity/parental leave.
[f] Sweden has now lowered school entry to age 6.
[g] Compulsory school entry is age 5.

The manifest purpose of ECEC programs remains a dual one:

1) education (broadly defined to include socialization and school readiness) for the 2 or 3 to 5 or 6 year olds, with "care" subsumed under the educational goal remains the primary objective of the pre-primary school programs;

2) care of children while mothers work (in paid employment outside the home), as the dominant goal for younger children (those under age 3). However, there is increasing attention to socialization, development, and cognitive stimulation -- or education in the broader sense – as key components or supplementary goals in providing care for very young children,

Among the other goals receiving more attention in recent years are that of: "early intervention", by which is meant intervention in the early years in order to prevent the development of subsequent problems (Shonkoff and Meisels, Forthcoming); compensatory education as in the U.S. Head Start program (Zigler and Styfco, 1993); and human capital investment (Young, 1996). A recent French article (Math and Reynaudat, 1997), suggests still another purpose for certain ECEC policies, namely that of creating jobs for low-wage/low skilled women, as in-home and out-of-home child care providers, a purpose also visible in the U.S.

Other policy issues include:

- the locus of policy responsibility: national or state or local government.
- administrative auspice: education, health, social welfare, or some combination; and where there is a combination, whether auspices change as children get older, or whether different auspices operate simultaneously.
- eligibility criteria: universal or targeted
- coverage: full coverage for age group (or at least such a goal) or partial coverage
- service delivery models: public, private non-profit, for-profit; center or family day care; in home or out of home care.
- financing and expenditure (costs and who pays): provider or consumer (supply or demand) subsidies; government subsidies; employer subsidies; parent fees. ECEC programs are funded largely by government, either national, state, or local authorities, depending on the country. Only in the Anglo-American countries do parent fees cover most of the costs[4]

[4] Data on expenditures for ECEC are neither readily available nor comparable across countries. Data for the Nordic countries are the most consistently available and reliable, published regularly in the Nordic statistics

For the most part, preschool programs are free (to parents) for the normal school day and year, with supplementary services available at subsidized and income –related fees. Fees for programs serving the under 3s were largely in the range of 10-25 percent of operating program costs in Europe in the early 1990s (and about the same in the Scandinavian countries with their full work-day programs), in contrast to about 76 percent in the U.S. (See Table 3).

There is no agreed on definition of – or standards concerning – quality of ECEC programs cross-nationally and there is little systematic attention to this subject in the literature. The last OECD effort at describing and assessing child care policies and programs in comparative perspective (Ergas, 1990) did not even attempt to deal with the issue of quality. U.S. researchers have carried out the most extensive efforts at identifying the variables that account for the most significant differences regarding program quality – and the consequences for children's socio-emotional-cognitive development. These variables have been identified as group size, staff-child ratios, and caregiver qualifications, in addition to health and safety standards. These criteria have been further refined and supplemented so that current indicators of quality would include caregivers' education and training, salaries, and turnover rates – among the dimensions of quality that can be regulated, and staff:child interactions and relationships among those variables that require direct observation. A recent EU report (Moss, 1996) specifying similar dimensions of quality, stresses the need to pay attention to parents' perceptions of quality as well as professionals' views, and to note the consequences for child well-being as well. Quality is characterized as a relative concept, reflecting the values and beliefs of the society in which the programs are embedded. The importance of integrating care and education regardless of the administrative auspice of the program, is emphasized as is the need for a stated, explicit educational mission.

In applying these standards to a sample of OECD countries, it appears that group size is an infrequently specified standard, that caregiver qualifications are difficult to assess without understanding patterns of education across countries, that neither caregivers' salaries (as a percentage of average wage, for example) nor caregivers' turnover rates are provided in the child care literature and related studies. Staff:child ratios are usually established in local or national standards and are indicated in some studies (Moss, 1996).

The research literature on outcomes and impacts of ECEC is enormous and well beyond what can be addressed in a brief report. here. It should be sufficient to note that the most extensive, systematic, and rigorous research has been carried out in the U.S. The

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report. In the early 1990s (selecting a time when data from several other countries are available as well), public expenditures for ECEC programs were about 2.4 percent of GDP in Sweden, 2 percent in Denmark, 1.1 percent in Finland, and .6 percent in Norway. Per place operating costs provide a fuller picture. The costs of a center place in Denmark in 1991 were about $13,000 per child per year, and about the same in Sweden. The cost of place in family day care was less, about $7,100 a year. Clearly, these countries are making a very substantial investment in ECEC.

several Head Start evaluations and related studies (Zigler and Styfco, 1993), the longitudinal study carried out by High/Scope of the Perry Preschool program (Berrueta-Clement, et al, 1984), the study of Costs, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers (Helburn, et al 1995), and the ongoing NICHD Early Child Care Research Network series of studies are all exemplars of important studies and offer rich data for further exploration.

But clearly there is important and relevant research that has been carried out in many other countries.[5]. Among the most influential European studies is the research of Bengt-Erik Anderson, the Swedish psychologist who followed several groups of children from infancy up to high school and compared them on the basis of various tests and teacher observations/ evaluations. Comparing "early starters" in day care centers (those entering at 9 – 12 months of age) with those in family day care, home care, those entering at a significantly later age, and those experiencing shifts in care, the research found distinct advantages by age 8 for early day care starters (and sustained subsequently). Positive differences were found in language and all school subjects except in gymnastics. Teachers found the early starters more outspoken, less anxious in school situations, more independent, and more persevering. (It must be remembered that these children were in consistently high quality programs.)

French research has documented the value of the *ecole maternelle* in achieving readiness for primary school and reducing primary school problems and school "failure" (Baudelot, 1988)[6] Renaudat (1997) provides a brief summary of recent research carried out under the auspices of the CNAF.

In Italy, too, a study by Musatti (1992) found that children ended up better prepared both for primary school if they had a preschool experience, and better prepared for preschool if they had a still earlier group experience.

ECEC Programs: Alternative Models

[To be Presented]

Conclusions

The movement toward universal preschools has clearly emerged as the dominant model of ECEC. Several countries have already achieved full coverage, regardless of parents' employment status or income or problem; and this is clearly the goal in those countries that have not yet achieved it. These programs are viewed as good for children and access is assured, sometimes as a matter of legal right and sometimes out of societal conviction. These programs are increasingly viewed as a "public good". Regardless of the

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5 One brief collection of summaries of research on ECEC in several countries including France, the former German Democratic Republic, Sweden, UK, and US is Edward C. Melhuish and Peter Moss, eds. Day Care for Children: International Perspectives. London and New York: Tavistock/Routledge, 1991

6 This finding was stressed repeatedly by officials of the Ministry of Education in France and French ECEC researchers, during a recent study tour of preschool education in France in January, 1999.

early focus on formal education, program goals have been broadened now to include socialization and enhancing development in addition to cognitive stimulation and preparing children for primary school. Strong evidence exists, demonstrating the value of these programs for all children and there is increasing recognition of the appropriateness of public financing for programs that should be available to all children, free of charge. The key issue for the future, in most countries with this model, is increasing the availability of supplementary services to meet the needs of employed parents.

Countries that established the ECEC program later, often in response to the pressures from working parents (or the recognition of increased demand), developed a model in which education and care were integrated from the onset. The small group of countries adopting this model have now come close to achieving full coverage. That remains their goal for now, as well as sustaining quality. These countries too have achieved full access to all children, as a matter of explicit government policy.

There appears to be some movement in those countries that have followed a dual-track model, towards an education-based program for 2 or 3 to 5 or 6 year olds, especially in the UK; but it is not yet clear. The delivery systems remain fragmented in the Anglo-American countries and coverage and quality are still inadequate.

Infant and toddler care have emerged as the key ECEC issue for the future, with growing consensus regarding infant care and continuing diversity regarding toddler care. No country has sufficient supply as yet and a new policy strategy has come to the fore in the last decade or so, suggesting an alternative approach. -- paid parental leave from employment The general trend now is to assume that infants should be cared for by a parent who is subsidized for some time at home (6-9-12-15-18 months?). For countries committed to high quality care, an at-home subsidy and a voluntarily taken, job-protected leave following birth may be cheaper – and is often preferred by parents. Family support services that offer a group experience for infants and toddler and their mothers, can provide an important supplement.

The trend appears to be toward acceptance of family day care (in particular for the under 3s) as a valued component of the ECEC system, as long as it is supervised and regulated and providers receive some training. When this is the case, however, and family day care providers receive a salary equal to staff in centers, and receive social (or fringe) benefits as well, family day care can no longer be viewed as the "cheap" alternative it now is in many countries, but rather as an alternative for those preferring smaller groups, sibling groups, more flexible hours, and, perhaps, greater intimacy.

Quality remains an issue everywhere but there appears to be growing consensus on the important dimensions even though the recommended standards have not yet been achieved in most countries. Educational philosophy varies among countries but countries following the preschool model tend to place more emphasis on a formal "curriculum" than

those following the integrated model; but all see themselves in one way or another, as preparing children for primary school.

Public financing is the dominant mode in all countries. Parent fees play a minor role in meeting the costs. Costs are high for good quality programs but there appears to be growing recognition of their value and its importance. Government subsidies are generous and given to providers, in most countries.

Finally, the continued rise in labor force participation rates of women with young children coupled with the growing recognition of the value of good quality ECEC programs for children regardless of parents' employment status, suggests that the pressure for expanding supply, improving quality, and assuring access will continue in all countries, despite variations in delivery strategies and preferences for a particular model.

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Italian Early Childhood Education: Variations on a Cultural Theme

Rebecca S. New

Introduction

Twenty five years have passed since the publication of Robert LeVine's (1974) analysis of the relationship between cultural values, parental goals, and the environments and practices associated with the period of early childhood. In that seminal work, LeVine reviews forty years of anthropological data to support the claim that adult behaviors with respect to the care of young children are a function not only of the biological characteristics of the child but also broadly construed cultural values. These values are implicit in the "presumptive tasks" of parenting; caregiving traditions, in turn, derive their rationale from prior historic and environmental conditions. LeVine concludes, furthermore, that while such "culturally organized formulas" may be responsive to environmental change within a few generations, it is essential to understand the bases for such adult priorities and behavior, including the constraints within which cultural values operate, before assessing the prospects of more deliberate change or intervention (p. 218).

This presentation builds upon this theoretical premise and utilizes it as a framework for analysis of the professionally organized and political contentious domain of early childhood education (i.e., what educators want for and do with young children within the contexts of institutional educational settings also reflects deeply held cultural beliefs and assumptions about what is normative, desirable, feasible, and necessary.) My presentation will conclude with an expanded interpretation of the relation between culture and children's early education and development, one that posits a reciprocal and dynamic transaction among cultural values, national policies, and educational goals and practices in early childhood. Several decades of research in Italy as well as ongoing work with teachers in settings across the U.S. will be utilized to support the position that our interpretations of and decisions regarding the education of young children not only reflect prior conditions and selective traditions but may also include a conscious commitment to change.

Italian Early Childhood Education

As is the case throughout the world, contemporary early childhood policies and programs in Italy are linked to that culture's enduring values as well as its more contemporary beliefs regarding the optimal course of a child's development and the processes which might best support children's early learning. Of significance in this regard is the intrinsic value of children and the importance assigned to the Italian family over much of the past century, examples of which may be found in public discourse as well as a wide array of social science literature. These values continue to find currency even as demographic features of the country have changed dramatically in the last several decades. For example, extended family households are now increasingly rare, and yet members of modern Italian families remain in close proximity to one another. Italy's birth rate is now one of the lowest in the world, and yet the concept of shared responsibility for children remains an ideal if not a practical reality in most Italian communities.

In spite of well-established regional variations in social and economic issues, not to mention dialects and localized preferences for wine, pasta, and cheese, Italians are remarkable homogeneous in their belief in the importance of a collaborative approach to the early care and education of young children. The traditional emphasis on the strength of kinship and family ties has served as a model for a number of early childhood policy and program initiatives in the past several decades. Today, this collaboration involves individuals beyond the nuclear family to include local and national institutions.

These broadly-construed cultural characteristics, including the high value associated with regional differences, are apparent, for example, in national Law No. 444 (passed in 1968). Proclaiming pre-primary school as a right of all children, this law gives priority to regional and municipal interpretations of scuola materna--or scuole dell'infanzia, as they are now regarded. National guidelines have also maintained the emphasis on family participation in children's early care and educational experiences, through, for example, the formalization of the role of parents and community members in the social management of asili nido (infant/toddler daycare). Although the 1968 law for universal preschool has never been fully implemented, particularly in the south, the expectation for such services is present throughout the north and central parts of the country. The regions of Lombardia, Emilia Romagna, and Tuscany have contributed much to the interpretation of these national policies; the cities of Milano, Reggio Emilia, Parma, Pistoia, and San Miniato are exemplars of this triage of cultural values, regional support, and local interpretation. I will draw upon two decades of personal experiences within these and other Italian communities, including an ongoing research project with indigenous collaborators, to address the questions of the day:

What can and should children learn?
How can they best learn these things?
How might we assess such learning?

Reports from the field: Multiple interpretations of quality

The current research project, conducted in collaboration with colleagues from Reggio Emilia and the University of Milano, was designed to take advantage of the rapid growth of high quality early childhood programs in Italy and represents the merging of three critical issues in American education: 1) the sources and characteristics of effective home-school relations; 2) the situatedness of "the Reggio Emilia approach" within the larger Italian context; and 3) the articulation of a theory of sociocultural activity as it reflects and contributes to the larger cultural context. Following an initial period of collaborative research design with colleagues in Reggio Emilia, four other Italian cities were invited to participate in Study I--Milan, Trento, Parma, and San Miniato--based on their geographic and demographic variation as well as reputations for high quality communal early childhood programs and an interest in home-school relations.

Research strategies were designed to examine beliefs and attitudes regarding home-school relations and high quality early care and education as well as their instantiation in

local practices. Of particular interest in the design of this study were two categories of sociocultural activity as manifested in these Italian communities: gestione sociale [a process and structure for local social management] and l'inserimento [the "delicate" period associated with a child's first transition into an early childhood setting]. Data collection procedures have included ethnographic observations; semi-structured interviews with families and teachers; document analysis; case studies; and questionnaires on developmental milestones, educational aims, and optimal child development. Following two years of data collection, the study has recently expanded to address three new issues now understood as essentially linked to Italian interpretations of home-school relations: concepts of community, social responsibility, and participation. To maximize the possibility of examining within-culture variability associated with these concepts, additional data has been collected in Milan in child care settings populated by immigrant and Gypsy families.

At this point in the study, data include 225 hour-long interviews completed with parents, teachers, administrators, advisory council members, and other historical informants; approximately 2000 parent and 350 teacher questionnaires; and extensive documentation and observations on home-school practices in each of the institutions included in the sample. The contemporary period of this investigation has also been marked by a number of important policy proposals at the national level relating to schooling, preschool education, and child care in general. Many of these initiatives have been discussed formally and informally at the participating research sites, thereby adding to the ethnographic component of this research study; these initiatives were also highlighted during my recent extended visit to Italy as a member of an OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) review team.

Although it is premature to label initial findings as "results," there are a number of enhanced theoretical and practical understandings that have developed over the course of this research investigation which appear germane to the challenges of this conference and the committee's larger agenda, including (a) the roles of cultural values and sub- cultural variability in the articulation and implementation of what we might call developmentally appropriate practices and the early childhood curriculum; (b) teacher expertise in terms of professional knowledge, attitudes of inquiry, and a willingness to collaborate as a quality indicator of early childhood programs; and (c) parental and civic participation as mediators of the diversity found in the interplay between cultural values, national policy, and local initiatives. These issues will be presented and elaborated upon through the use of slides as well as interview and questionnaire data from each of the five participating cities.

Implications for U.S. early childhood education

Early childhood education in the U.S. stands in sharp contrast to this Italian example in a number of ways, not the least of which is the absence of a national commitment to provide such an early education to all young children, much less a coherent early educational system. Indeed, an analysis of contemporary early educational policies and practices within

the U.S. reveals a dramatically different cultural model of early childhood, one that is as unstable as other indices of our rapidly changing society. For much of this century, citizens, educators, and policy makers have debated various interpretations of feasible, equitable, and effective educational policies and practices, with little consensus about how best to respond to the diverse circumstances and educational needs of American children . Key features of the American culture that contribute to this challenge include a) the explosion of public interest and scientific knowledge related to young children over the past three decades; b) the rapid expansion in the number and variety of programs for young children who are more ethnically and developmentally diverse than at any previous period in our nation's history; and c) the increasingly politicized nature of discussions and decisions regarding developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood programs. Given these differences, what might this Italian research show us about how and what young children can learn? Given the Italian educational system's historic neglect of traditional approaches to assessment, how might our understandings of such places as Reggio Emilia and San Miniato guide us in our own efforts to be more responsible and accountable for children's learning?

As an initial response, I will return to the premise with which I began this presentation, which is that the questions asked and the decisions made about young children reflect broad cultural values, beliefs, and goals. The potential success or failure of educational reform efforts in the U.S., whether the ideas for these reforms come from Italy or elsewhere, will depend upon our ability to understand and critique (1) the cultural currency assigned to the qualities of independence and autonomy in children and adults; (2) the scientific heritage of the early childhood profession; and (3) the dialectical tension associated with concepts of diversity and inclusion in a pluralistic society. In combination, these characteristics contribute to our culture's multiple and often contentious values, beliefs, and goals for young children and give heft to the daunting nature of this committee's assigned task.

The recommendations which will follow are based on a reframing of the questions, to wit,

- What should adults do to maximize each child's current and future capacities to participate fully in a pluralistic democratic society?
- Who among the numerous stakeholders gets to decide the practical details of this purposefully oblique goal, particularly as it entails an early childhood curriculum?
- Who has the privilege and the responsibility for assessing the outcomes of this educational enterprise?

Conclusions

Concluding comments will address the implications of this Italian research as it might influence changes in U.S. cultural norms, policies, and practices--each of which will be described as transactionally linked. In illuminating the role of the Italian culture in its diverse educational policies and numerous high quality early childhood program developments, the aim is not to suggest that American educators would do well to adopt one or another of these Italian approaches, whether the "Reggio Emilia approach" or the one found in Milano or Parma, for that matter. Rather, the intent is for these Italian examples to serve as a provocation for contemplating the cultural challenges inherent in current efforts to improve the learning opportunities and educational accomplishments of young children in the U.S..

To that end, recommendations will be made for the following cultural reconstructions:

- A three-dimensional image of the child as subject, protagonist, and citizen;
- An early childhood curriculum as guided, negotiated, and convergent;
- A reconceptualization of teachers and teacher education, with emphases on inquiry and collaboration as new professional goals; and
- Responsibilities of the national government as role model and provocateur.

Early Learning and Human Development: The Turkish Early Enrichment Program

Cigdem Kagitcibasi

Introduction

To understand children's early learning, we need to situate it into context and approach it from a general human development perspective. Such an approach needs to entail on the one hand the study of the proximal environment of the child, the caretaker/family, and on the other hand the overall development of the child, including the development of competence and of the self. Thus, to answer questions such as 'What can/should children learn?', 'How can/should we teach them those things?', and 'How is it best to assess their learning?' we need to consider the contexts of development, and the changes in these which render some types of childrearing/teaching functional and some others dysfunctional.

I will examine briefly the development of the self and of competence, particularly the latter, from a contextual-functional perspective. The contextual focus here is the changing life styles and family patterns in the Majority World, particularly accompanying migration into urban areas, but also with global implications for societies undergoing rapid socio-economic change and where there is a diversity of socio-cultural realities.

The Autonomous-Relational Self

Current theorizing in social and cross-cultural psychology examines the behavioral characteristics of different types of selves, in particular the separated and relational (independent and interdependent) selves. To reveal the dynamics of why and how separated and relational selves develop, we need to go below the surface and utilize an approach that is both contextual and functional. Thus it is important to understand what kinds of family interaction patterns and child rearing orientations lead to the development of the separated/relational selves; and what kinds of socio-economic-cultural contexts produce (necessitate) those particular family patterns, and why. In dealing with such issues, the Family Change Model (Kagitcibasi, 1996a) provides us with some conceptual tools which also have implications for applications.

The individualistic construal of the self, which pervades psychological theory and applications, claims that separation and individuation are necessary for the development of autonomy. At a basic existential level this is true, in the sense that every developing person needs to have an understanding of self as a separate entity from others. However, psychological teaching goes much beyond this in stressing individualism, in terms of several ideal concepts, such as individual freedom, independence, individual achievement, self-efficacy, self-actualization, self-reliance, privacy, etc. endorsing the separated self with clearly defined boundaries. When self boundaries overlap with other selves, this is considered an "enmeshed" or symbiotic relationship, thus pathological (e.g. Minuchin, 1974). Thus, separation is seen as a requisite for autonomy, therefore, connected or interdependent selves are considered not to be capable of autonomous action. Such

conceptualization is highly problematic regarding the majority of human societies where individualism is not a social norm, and where close-knit human ties are prevalent.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Kagitcibasi, 1996b), the above theorizing which is dominant in Western (American)psychology confounds the two independent dimensions of interpersonal distance and agency. The former is a dimension going from separateness to relatedness; the latter has autonomy and heteronomy as its poles. Since these dimensions are independent of each other both logically and psychologically, it is possible to have a self integrating both autonomy and relatedness. This makes ample sense particularly in the non-Western world with 'cultures of relatedness' where close-knit human ties can be and should be sustained while autonomy can be introduced into childrearing (Kagitcibasi, 1996a). In traditional (mainly rural, or low SES urban) childrearing, autonomy is often lacking because an obedience orientation is seen to be functional for the development of a loyal, socially responsible offspring who will uphold family interests, such as old-age security of parents, rather than self interest. However, particularly with urbanization, objective conditions change which decrease intergenerational material interdependencies in the family and require autonomy (individual decision making, etc.) for competence in school and more specialized urban jobs. Thus autonomy has to be encouraged and taught to children, while sustaining relatedness.

Even in the more individualistic technologically advanced societies encouraging both autonomy and relatedness in childrearing/teaching, rather than stressing one at the cost of the other, promises to contribute to psychological health and well-being. This is because such an integrated orientation to childrearing/teaching better satisfies the two basic human needs for relatedness and agency.

At the interface of the development of the self and of competence the autonomous-relational self can be seen as a healthy synthesis for a competent and adapted person who can function autonomously in the urban technological society while being able to sustain close human ties with significant others. Developmental scientists, applied researchers, and policy makers can help promote such human well-being through training, intervention and general social sensitization.

Competence

As for the development of competence, it is again important to recognize the changing demands of urban life styles, involving schooling and more specialized and differentiated tasks and roles. These changing life styles necessitate new conceptions of competence, involving shifts from purely 'social and practical intelligence' toward school-like cognitive and language skills and technological literacy. Children, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds should be supported to develop the cognitive competencies to realize their full potential in challenging environments.

The integrated overall development of competence is mediated by the proximal environment, mostly the caretaker. Indeed, it is the proximal family environment which often shields the growing person from the adversities in the environment. Work on resilience in adverse conditions of poverty points to the significance of a close supportive child-caretaker relationship.

Thus recent intervention work in the U.S. has addressed overall development from an ecological perspective (for reviews see Masten & Coatesworth 1998; McLoyd, 1998). Similarly, early intervention programs both in the U.S. and around the world, focusing on early cognitive development of children have pointed to the important role of parent involvement (for reviews see Kagitcibasi, 1997; Masten & Coatesworth, 1998; Myers, 1992). Several studies and reviews of the field point to the significant role of the caregiver covering a broad range of developmental spheres from health/nutrition to cognitive development of the. For example, in the U.S. Korenman et al. (1995) using the NLSY showed that the amount of emotional support and cognitive stimulation in home environment accounts for 1/3 to 1/2 of the disadvantages in verbal, reading and math skills among persistently poor children. Lee and Croninger (1994) using the NELS, found home support variables (literacy resources in the home, discussion of school matters, mothers' educational expectations) to reduce the effect of poverty on reading achievement by more than half. Ecclest & Harold (1993) and Epstein (1990) showed that variation in parental involvement contributes to disparities in achievement within and across income groups.

Thus, the proximal home environment of the child is crucial for the development of competence. The program/policy implication is that if the home environment does not provide the child with adequate cognitive support/stimulation or with the opportunities for the development of autonomy, then parent education is called for. If the child's immediate environment is not supported and changed, the gains from a program targeting the child alone would not be long lasting. This is because the child would be left to rely on his/her own limited resources at the end of the program, whereas a supportive home environment helps sustain gains.

I will present briefly our work in Turkey as a case in point for supporting the child's proximate environment to promote overall development. In particular, the mediational role of the mother in providing the child with cognitive enrichment comes to the fore here.

TEEP and its Applications: A Case for Intervention

The research from Turkey and its resultant program applications to be presented here derive from a 10-year study, including an original 4-year longitudinal study and its follow-up, known as the Turkish Early Enrichment Project (TEEP) (Kagitcibasi, 1995; Kagitcibasi, Sunar & Bekman, 1988; Kagitcibasi, Bekman & Sunar, 1993). The original research was conducted in five low-income districts of Istanbul with mothers and their young children in 1982-1986. Six years after the end of the original study, a follow-up study was carried out to assess the long-term effects of the intervention.

The study[7] set out to assess the socio-emotional and cognitive development of young children (3 and 5 years of age) and the childrearing attitudes, self concepts and world views of their mothers in the first year; baselines were thus established. In the second and the third years mother training was provided to a randomly selected group of mothers. In the fourth year both the children and the mothers were reassessed, and before-after and experimental-control comparisons were made. Altogether 255 families participated in the study; 90 took part in mother training. Most of the mothers had only a primary education (the mean was 5.4 school years) ; three fourths were of rural origin, having migrated to the city mostly in their teens. Two thirds of the mothers were unskilled or semiskilled factory workers, and their children were attending factory day care centers.

Mother training had two components, a cognitive component and a mother support component; the whole program lasted 60 weeks, over a 2-year period. 'The cognitive component' comprised the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) of Lombard (1981)[8]. It consisted of work sheets and story books, designed to promote pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills to prepare children for school, focusing on language, sensory and perceptual discrimination skills, and problem solving. It was applied to mothers through biweekly home visits and group discussion sessions; mothers worked on the materials with their children at home. 'The mother support component' was prepared by the research team to foster the socio-emotional development of the child and to support the mother in empowering her to cope with problems and to be sensitive to the needs of her growing child as well as to her own needs as a woman. It was conducted through bi-weekly guided group discussions.

Fourth Year Results. Through the program, mothers' literacy skills improved, as they read the story books to their children and discussed them (asking questions, answering questions, etc.) and gave all the instructions to their children on the work sheets. Equally important was the positive changes in mother's sense of self efficacy, now that they were in the role of their children's 'teachers'.

Significant differences were found in children's Stanford Binet IQ Scores, school grades, standardized tests of academic achievement, and subtests of Wechsler Intelligence Test, all favoring the children whose mothers were trained. The experimental group of children also exhibited positive effects on their socio-emotional development, displaying less dependency, less aggressiveness, higher autonomy and social acceptance, better self concept and better school adjustment.

Mothers also benefited from the intervention. In their interactions with their children, they were found to verbalize more, to be less punitive, more responsive, and more

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[7] The original study was funded by the International Development Research Centre of Canada; the follow up study was funded by the Population Council (MEAwards Program).

[8] Afterwards this was replaced by a cognitive training program that we developed, which is currently in use. Its contents, approach and goals are similar to those of HIPPY.

cognitively stimulating. They also manifested a more positive interaction pattern with their spouses and to enjoy more egalitarian relations with them.

The Follow-Up Study and its Results. It was considered important to assess if these gains in children, mothers and the families were long lasting. Therefore, six years after the end of the original study, a follow up was conducted in which mothers, fathers and children (now adolescents) were interviewed and children's cognitive development and school assessment was reassessed. 217 of the 255 families participated in the follow up study.

An important finding was the higher school attainment of the children whose mothers had undergone mother training; 86 % of this group, compared with only 67 % of the control group, were still in school. Compulsory schooling was only 5 years in Turkey at the time, therefore in low-income areas especially, those children who are not successful in school drop out after the compulsory five years of primary school. The fact that many more of the experimental group were still in school at ages 13-15, beyond compulsory schooling, points to their better motivation, more positive attitudes toward education and better performance. As schooling is the main route for social mobility in urban low-income contexts, the social implications of this finding are important.

Indeed, the experimental group showed better school performance than the control group throughout the primary school, assessed by their grades. They also surpassed the control group on the vocabulary subtest of the WISC-R (using Turkish word counts), showing higher cognitive performance. These adolescents also manifested more positive attitudes toward education and better academic self-concept.

All these findings point to general higher competence among adolescents whose mothers had undergone training many years before. This was complemented by parents' greater interest in their children's schooling and higher educational expectations for them. The adolescents' "student role" was better supported in these families. In other spheres, also, sustained gains were seen in the experimental group, including better parent-child and spousal relations and higher intra-family status of the mothers. Clearly the benefits of the mother training program had been sustained over time and had promoted positive development for both children and their families.

Policy-Relevant Developments: MOCEP. The positive results of the Turkish Early Enrichment Project, and especially its follow-up study, soon bore fruit in expanding applications and policy-relevant developments. After a number of pilot applications, supported by voluntary groups, UNICEF, and the Turkish Ministry of Education, a new cognitive program was developed, condensed into a span of 25 weeks, and the mother support program was revised to include family planning and health. The whole 'Mother Child Education Program'(MOCEP) started to be applied in weekly group meetings in adult education centers of the Ministry of Education. The Mother-Child Education Foundation was established in 1993 for the purpose of expanding the applications of the program.

The applications are expanding with World Bank support in some 59 provinces all over the country, including some of the least developed areas (in 1998-99, 18590 women + children have participated in the program, run by 281 teachers. Up to now, 55,000 people have benefited from the program). As a consequence of the program's success, the Ministry of Education has now changed its policy of preschool education to include also home/community based non-formal education in addition to formal preschools.

Recently an evaluation study was carried out by Bekman (1998) of the MOCEP applications in four different provinces in Turkey. Positive effects of program participation were found among both the mothers and the children. Pre-post experimental-control comparisons were done, and one year after the end of the program, at the completion of the first grade, another post-test was carried out. In the first year post tests, before school entry, children whose mothers participated in MOCEP were found to surpass the control group in preliteracy and prenumeracy skills. At the end of the first grade, also, their gains were sustained with better school performance, compared to the control group. Better school readiness and school performance was evidenced in terms of both the grades obtained and teacher evaluations. The mothers were also found to benefit from program participation in terms of both improved self concepts and positive interactions with their children. They also displayed more interest in their children's education and schooling and provided them with more stimulating home environments.

Another recent research (Kagitcibasi, Goksen, Gulgoz, 1998) studied various effects of the program on women who participated in MOCEP compared with those who participated in a literacy program. Pre-post tests showed that MOCEP participants allowed more autonomy to their children as a result of the program, compared with the literacy group.

It is notable that these positive results emanate from a widescale non-formal education program. Thus they have high policy relevance pointing to the importance of non-formal home- and community-based education through the mother to supplement as well as to enhance formal preschool education. Clearly TEEP and its extension MOCEP constitute an important case for intervention to help promote of human competence.

Conclusion

Turning to the original questions regarding what children should learn and should be taught, it is clear that children should learn skills and develop capacities which will enable them to be competent in challenging environments and to sustain supportive human ties. The assessment of their learning is best done over time, to see if gains are sustained, and in terms of real life performance, such as school attainment. Overall competence, including social and cognitive development and autonomy (together with the capacity for close human ties) should be the goal.

Some skills and capacities needed in urban environments with schooling and more specialized tasks are different from those in rural subsistence economies. In particular

autonomy and school like cognitive skills become adaptive with socio-economic development. Children from poor families with low levels of education are often not 'taught' the skills and capabilities they need for competence in cognitively challenging environments which also require autonomy. These children can be supported in their developmental trajectories through providing support to their families. Such support should be designed to empower the family in coping with problems and to provide insight as to the changing environmental demands on the child. In partnership with families positive child development outcomes can be achieved. Multipurpose programs with multiple targets and goals are promising in producing sustained gains for all involved.

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Response and Comments

Robert G. Myers

I will briefly discuss three points related to "what children should learn" and "how we should teach those things"

Seeking social coincidence (or congruence)

This point will reinforce the notion, certain to be elaborated by others, that learning occurs in context and proceeds from a value position. That value position must be made clear in order to seek coincidence between social goals and the kinds of learning activities provided. A method is needed to clarify value positions held by teachers and parents so they can be more aware of how their actions reinforce or contradict those positions.

Taking an inter-generational approach to pedagogy

Simply stated, learning and teaching will be most effective if the developmental needs of adults (parents and teachers) as well as of children are taken into account when establishing a program.

Considering costs

Cost can be a limiting factor when considering what pedagogy to choose. There is a need to find an intermediate path between often-preferred high-cost options that may not be necessary and/or feasible in many settings, and low-cost options that do not do the job.

Beyond the "Average Native": Cultural Models of Early Childhood Education in Japan.

Susan D. Holloway

The Growing Focus on Individualism and Collectivism

As psychology and anthropology collide in the academic marketplace, one major focus of effort has been to characterize societies -- and people -- in terms of the individualism (or independence) versus collectivism (or interdependence) dichotomy. In these formulations, at the psychological level, independent people are typically characterized as separate, autonomous, egocentric and self-contained. Interdependent or collectively oriented people are described with such terms as sociocentric, holistic, collective, contextualist, and relational. For example, in their recent chapter in the Handbook of Child Psychology, Shweder and colleagues argue that "The individualistic model of the self....is an obvious and natural model for European American researchers.....Another model of the self stands in significant contrast to individualism, but is generally characteristic of Japan, China, Korea, Southeast Asia, and much of South America and Africa. According to this perspective, the self is not and cannot be separate from others and the surrounding social context. The self is experienced as interdependent with the surrounding social context."(Shweder et al 1998, p. 899)

This distinction is seen as a key to understanding the development of children from ethnic minorities in the United States and a guide in developing educational programs that are "culturally sensitive." For example, Greenfield proposes that "a value orientation stressing interdependence would characterize the cultural and cross-cultural roots of socialization practices and developmental goals for the [following] minority groups...: Native Americans, African Americans, African French, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans and Asian Canadians." (Greenfield, 1994, p. 7).

In my presentation I wish to take a closer look at the dynamics of "interdependence" in Japan. I will give you a snapshot of three very different approaches to socializing a "collectivistic" orientation in Japanese children. I hope to convince you that this diversity springs from varied cultural models about child rearing and education that exist even in Japan, considered by some to be a quintessentially homogenous, group-oriented society. After witnessing the varied ways in which preschool directors conceptualized the role of the school in nurturing skills in group participation and personal development, I came to see little value in global categories like interdependence as a framework for understanding how Japanese preschool directors structured their programs.[1]

Cultural Models of Socialization and Pedagogy

The work on cultural models offers a promising framework for capturing the diversity of Japanese preschools. A cultural model or schema is a mental representation of how things work, or of how they should work. Cultural models come in many forms, including propositional statements of belief as well as scripts or behavior sequences used in routine situations (D'Andrade, 1992; Holland et al., 1998; Quinn & Holland, 1987). Shore (1996) talks about cultural models as being "twice born" because they are instituted at a shared social level, and then are taken on and given an idiosyncratic meaning by the individual.

Cultural models are viewed as existing on multiple levels. They are found within narrowly bounded social settings, such as neighborhood. But there may also be "foundational schemas," abstract and global schemas that link up a family of related, domain specific models. . Shore (1996) argues that "A foundational schema functions as a kind of template, a common underlying form that links superficially diverse cultural models and contributes to the sometimes ineffable sense of "style" or "ethos" characteristic of a culture. (P. 117). The collectivist orientation of Japan, for example, could be called a foundational schema

When it comes to an important topic like rearing and educating children, a number of cultural models are usually available in any given community. This cultural "pool" of beliefs and practices may contain elements that are in tension, or even in fundamental conflict, with each other (Kojima 1986, 1988). Each person will endorse a subset of these models, meaning that individuals in a community will sometimes disagree with each other in their interpretation of what is appropriate. Additionally a single individual will hold ideas that are internally inconsistent, and will often remain unaware of their mutual incompatibility. So within the general foundational schema of collectivism, there may be sharply divergent models as to how human relations should be organized, and socialized in young children (see Harkness & Super, 1995; Holloway et al., 1997).

The Role of Cultural Models in Early Childhood Education

How does this theoretical work on cultural models apply to the development of early childhood education programs? Exploration of this issue first requires the assumption that the preschool is a cultural institution, and that the content of what is taught and the way that it is taught and assessed can be characterized as cultural models. My position is that parents' and teachers' views about even the elements of preschooling that seem the most culture-free, like learning the alphabet, are elements of one or more cultural models that cut across the cognitive and social domains (see Holloway and Fuller (in press) for a more complete discussion). In our study of low-income mothers, for example, we found that the cultural model endorsing teacher-structured lessons in the ABC's in preschool was connected to concepts about adult authority as well as other schemas (Holloway et al., 1997).

A growing number of studies have provided descriptions of the cultural models of preschool teachers. These researchers found ethnic and social class differences even within a small geographical area. For example, Joffe's early work (1977) detailed how the aims of white middle-class nursery school teachers in Berkeley conflicted with low-income black parents' expectations about what their children should be learning at school. Her work was extended by Lubeck (1985), who compared a Head Start program staffed by working class African American teachers with a private preschool staffed by middle class white teachers. Her findings illuminated differences in what children should learn and how teachers should teach. More recently, Zinsser (1991) looked at the varied types of child care provided in a working-class community in the process of becoming "gentrified". The older Italian-

American women who provided much of the family day care focused on providing a safe, clean, familiar environment, whereas a younger generation catered to the desires of professional newcomers who expected cognitive stimulation and preparation for school. Zinsser's evidence revealed sharp conflicts in the cultural models within this community.

Examining Cultural Models of Early Education within Japan

Evidence about within-country variation in Japan is in short supply (see critiques by Gjerde, 1994; Mouer & Sugimoto, 1986; Smith, 1994). Our knowledge based tends to fall into two general categories: general overviews of the child care system (e.g., Boocock, 1989; Shwalb et al, 1992) and ethnographies. Most ethnographers explicitly refer to the diversity of preschools in Japan, but focus on a particular model that is perceived by many Japanese as "typical" (Hendry, 1986; Lewis, 1995; Peak, 1991, 1992; Tobin, Wu & Davidson, 1989).

In my study of Japanese preschools, I hoped to build from this earlier work, while extending it by encompassing a wider array of preschool types. I also wanted to capture an interesting moment in historical time, one in which preschool directors were reacting to new guidelines from the Ministry of Education which encouraged all schools from preschool through secondary school to increase the degree to which instruction was "individualized," and to promote creativity, personal initiative, and an ability to understand and relate to the world outside of Japan. These guidelines forced the issue of collectivism and individualism to the surface. Because public and private preschool directors have significant latitude in how they interpret and implement the guidelines, they were engaged in a very active, conscious debate when I collected this data in 1994.

In describing recent developments in the fields of anthropology and psychology, Bradd Shore (1996) has written that "the agents of culture are no longer hypothetical or average natives but look like real individuals with specific histories, particular interests, and concrete strategies" (p. 55). I want to show how particular Japanese preschool directors -- not the average or typical Japanese director -- drew particular cultural models of teaching and learning from the pool of models current available, and wove them into distinctive programs.

Sample and Method

This qualitative data set consists of interviews and observations in 32 early childhood settings -- both preschools and child-care centers -- largely in the Kansai area, which includes the major cities of Osaka and Kobe. In each preschool the director and one or more teachers were interviewed by me and a Japanese bilingual assistant. The interview was designed to probe cultural models regarding the goals of the school experience, theories about the role of the teacher in facilitating learning, views about discipline and control, details of the curriculum and activities, and perceptions about the family and its relationship with early childhood education. Four settings were selected for more intense study -- I spent at least five days in each setting, observing in a classroom for four-year-olds and conducting further interviews with the staff. All interviews were tape recorded and later translated by a

bilingual Japanese assistant. Transcriptions were coded using a qualitative software passage. Observation notes were used to understand and contextualize the interview data.

Findings

All of the preschool directors that I interviewed expressed an interest in the issue of group membership, including what it meant to function as a group, what the benefits and drawbacks were to an emphasis on groups, and how group membership could be balanced with respecting and cultivating individual characteristics. Overall, I would argue that their preoccupations provided support for the claim that functioning effectively in a group is a "foundational schema" in Japan.

However, I also found a great deal of diversity in how they addressed each of these sub-issues. Three patterns, or ways of addressing the respective role of group and individual, could be identified. Each type was characterized by distinctive beliefs about the basic nature of the child, and how the child should behave and what the child should know in order to function competently in Japanese society. I will characterize them in terms of their cultural models pertaining to the self and group, importance placed on role-appropriate behavior, preferred modes of behavioral control, the importance of emotional attachment, and use of procedures to structure behavior.

At *role oriented* preschools, the basic curriculum tended to be very skill oriented. Often the curriculum for four year olds consisted of learning to read *kanji* (Chinese characters that form the basis of Japanese written language), write *kana* (simplified characters), engage in pattern recognition and memory building activities, play musical instruments, draw, and paint. Other subjects, often taught by specialists once a week, included English, writing, choral singing, and gymnastics. These schools tended to be very large and were often under the direction of a Buddhist priest. They were never public schools -- this type of skill orientation has received a great deal of criticism in recent years by the Ministry of Education.

The following statement summarizes one director's view about the way in which acceptance of one's role results in group strength:

> **We need to create a feeling of harmony (*wa*) among people but not simply conformity (*do*). With harmony we can communicate but our individual identity remains clear. With conformity we overlap and blend together too much. Agreement exists with doubts. To get harmony we need to have a clear understanding and acceptance of our role. If one person is clear who he is he can join with another to create something new. If he is wishy washy about who he is he can't synchronize with anyone... We need to revive the idea held by traditional artisans who have a strong feeling of responsibility toward their trade and pride in their skills....It is good to have the artisanal spirit *(shokunin katagi*). We need the strength to find and go our own way.**

Relation-oriented preschools introduce children to routine behaviors needed for successful participation in group life, like greeting the teacher appropriately, managing one's belongings neatly and efficiently, and fitting into the temporal rhythms of the classroom. These schools made no attempt to introduce or promote literacy or numeracy. Teachers in these preschools are usually warm, patient and enthusiastic. They try to maintain positive relations with the children and avoid directly controlling their behavior. Most of the public preschools I visited fell into this group, as well as roughly half of the private preschools.

Observations revealed that children at relation-oriented preschools spent much of their time alternating between free play and carefully managed group activities. The daily schedule was frequently changed when they needed to practice for a performance or when they went on a field trip. For instance, in the fall the children usually went on one or more trips to the country side to pick grapes, dig up sweet potatoes, and collect fallen leaves. Art activities were linked to these activities and other seasonal themes.

In one relation-oriented preschool, a teacher told me that her primary goal for the three year olds was to become accustomed to group life, with a second goal being to "establish his or her own character." She saw free play as providing children with an opportunity to improve their relationships with peers:

> **I try to encourage the children to play with others. But in sand play for example the children tend to play alone. I would like to avoid solitary play and encourage children to play together. After all, three year olds learn the existence of certain rules even in play...They learn what they should not do. They also learn that they can hurt other children's feelings by taking certain actions.**

For the teachers of four year olds, the development of social skills was also emphasized:

> **The overall objective for the four year olds is becoming accustomed to group life, and acquiring daily routines such as changing clothes by themselves and eating everything prepared for lunch. It is also important to learn to maintain one's individuality in group life, and at the same time make as many friends as possible.**

Child-oriented preschools emphasized the importance of responding to individual needs and nurturing individual characteristics. The notion of having a profound respect for the child's individual character was fundamental to the philosophy at one child-centered preschool, Hikari. As Ms. Watanabe, assistant director at Hikari put it, **"When you observe each individual child you will find that he has a particular individual nature (*kosei*). I believe that education begins when we receive children as they are."**

Establishing a focus on the individual had direct ramifications for the curriculum. Much of the day at child-oriented preschools was spent in free play but the nature of the play differed significantly from that which occurred in the society-oriented preschools because the children had access to a wide variety of materials arranged in interest centers. In one class for four year olds at Hikari Preschool, for example, the children spent the morning circulating among stations containing blocks, art materials, and manipulative toys. This combination of rich materials and structuring of activities within time and space resulted in many constructive projects that reflected the interests and talents of the child, as well as extended bouts of pretend play. Children were observed building an intricate bowling game out of large wooden blocks, making origami figures for the bulletin board, creating collages with pieces of felt, using simple looms to weave strands of yarn, and working together to paint a large cardboard box to be used as a puppet theater in the upcoming sports day festivities.

While the child-oriented Japanese preschools focused on nurturing the interests and skills of the individual child, one intended outcome of these skills was to improve the child's capacity for human relations. For example, I observed one teacher make repeated attempts to engage a somewhat reticent child in conversation. Conversations with the teacher revealed that her goal was to improve his verbal skills so that he can communicate effectively and form closer relationships with other children. Thus, while her strategy of scaffolding during her conversations is not so different from what one might find in many American preschools, the goal was relationship-building rather than self-expression.

The following statement by a director demonstrates her view of how children with a sense of themselves are ultimately more effective in working within a group:

> **A group consists of individuals. If each individual grows the entire group becomes better. We do some group activities. One way to do them is to form the group first, and then tell them what to do. The other way is for each individual to propose different ideas and then integrate those ideas. The end results may be the same but the processes are different.**

The differences across the three patterns are summarized in this chart:

	Types of Preschools		
	Role	**Relational**	**Child**
Conceptions of self and group	Co-existence	Relational	Person-based
Modes of control	Authoritarian	Diffused	Diffused
Significance of emotional attachment	Low	High	High
Use of procedures	High	High	Low

Conclusions

I hope I have convinced you of the diverse ways that socialization and pedagogy are conceptualized within Japan. Although it is a centralized system in terms of funding, directors are given wide latitude to create a program based on

- educational training (in some cases) and experience
- perceptions of general trends in society
- cultural models of teaching and learning
- cultural models of the fundamental nature of the child

One result of this process of appropriation and construction is tremendous diversity in the ways in which the relative roles of the individual and the group are conceptualized and structured.

Marie Suizzo has asked that I generally address the issues of how teaching and learning should occur, in the eyes of Japanese education experts. I will conclude with giving a sense of how the system is currently structured to result in the type of diversity I have described. As I hope has become clear, in the Japanese system, the directors are really the primary architects of the program. Teachers have little input into how the program is constructed and operated. In each of the programs I visited, the teachers were expected to learn and implement the director's philosophy. As in the Japanese business world, there was significant emphasis on "on-site" training. Teachers were not particularly expected to challenge or shape the program to suit their own cultural models, although I am sure that a careful observational study could find evidence that this occurred to a small extent.

The primary role of parents is to select a program that suited their goals. Parents are aware of the general philosophical thrust of the program; private preschools in particular try to offer special classes and services that appeal to parents. Once a child enrolled, teachers convey information and advice to parents but do not seek input or substantive involvement by parents in the program. Parents are not present in the classroom. There is no explicit goal of maintaining consistency between home and school practices. Indeed, most directors feel that they need to complement or compensate for the inadequate childrearing practices of parents.

In a system as diverse as this one, issues pertaining to measurement are very complex. My sense is that the Japanese government has not been particularly concerned with assessment at this level. In the first place, as we have seen, there are many different desired competencies, from the development of empathy to the learning of routines and the fulfillment of role expectations. The things that are easiest to measure, like numeracy and literacy, tend not to be emphasized in many of the schools, and the Ministry of Education

firmly supports the formal introduction of these skills in elementary school, not preschool. And I know of no existing measures to assess those things that are valued, such as the ability to derive pleasure from participating in group activities, or the ability to fold one's raincoat properly before packing it in one's backpack.

I hope that my study opens up the door to additional exploration of the ways in which cultural models of children, childrearing and pedagogy are appropriated and interpreted by particular, rather than "average" early childhood educators in societies around the world.

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Endnotes

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[1].Two general trends in the fields of anthropology and psychology call into question the individualism and collectivism dichotomy. Over the last 20 years of postmodern thinking, the notion of "culture" as represented in traditional ethnographies has been criticized as being "essentialist," ahistorical, and apolitical. As they began to focus more intently on how power permeates who has control over the cultural "messages," many anthropologists have shifted their focus from documenting the views and practices of a society viewed as unified to a study of the "discourses" and strategies used by competing interest groups and political actors (Shore, 1996; Holland et al., 1998). To a large extent the characterization of societies as individualistic or collectivistic reflects the older anthropological notion that a society has a coherent, unified, equally shared and endorsed set of values, beliefs, and behaviors. It does not take into account how the beliefs and practices of members in a society are affected by structural issues like power and gender, and how they can be inconsistent and fragmented.

A second problem with the individualism-collectivism dichotomy is that it doesn't reflect the new emphasis, introduced primarily by psychologists, on the active role of the individual in appropriating cultural representations. More recent psychological views focus on such issues as the process by which schemas (beliefs or behaviors) are co-constructed and how they are integrated with other schemas. The quandary for psychologically-minded anthropologists and anthropologically-minded psychologists is how to describe *collective* patterns of thought and behavior in a way that acknowledges the active role of the *individual* in appropriating and re-interpreting them.